

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
July 17 & 18, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9 A.M., on July 17, 2007, in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Ford, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Elmira Forner, Carol Moser, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman.

MINUTES APPROVAL

It was moved by Commissioner Moser and seconded by Commissioner Barnes to approve the meeting minutes of the May 15, 2007 local meeting, May 22, 2007 Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Hearing and the May 23, 2007 regular Commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY ACT (NEPA) TRIBAL CONSULTATION EFFORTS**

Megan Beeby, Environmental Services Tribal Liaison, WSDOT, explained that the 2004 Legislative session directed the Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Committee (TPEAC) to develop a "model NEPA tribal consultation process for federal transportation aid projects related to the preservation of cultural, historic, and environmental resources". The Department has met with 27 of the States 29 federally recognized tribes formally and the other two informally. These meetings resulted in 12 recommendations for an improved consultation process. This model process was designed for project teams to use as a tool on federal aid projects for which the Federal Highway Administration is the lead agency.

Colleen Jollie, Tribal Liaison, WSDOT, provided an overview of the tribal liaison's function within the Department. She explained that the Centennial Accord has been reaffirmed by the Millennium Agreement that was signed in 2000. The Department works collectively with the tribes, especially on federally funded projects, to determine the impacts on tribal natural and cultural resources as well as grants.

Ms. Beeby explained that NEPA was chosen because the majority of the projects are federalized and must go through some sort of NEPA review. NEPA is often used to satisfy the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements because NEPA acts as an umbrella under which the Department must comply with a number of other federal laws. This process is designed to make certain that all necessary parties are involved throughout a project.

OVERVIEW OF TOLING STUDY II AND TIP LEGISLATIVE DIRECTIVES

Jeff Doyle, Director, Public-Private Partnerships, WSDOT, explained that the Department requested a decision package of \$2.8 million from the Legislature this session to deal with unsolicited proposals (there is currently a moratorium on unsolicited proposals),

and to conduct project reviews and eventually a solicitation if there are projects on the registry that merited development. The Commission will contract with the TIP Program to develop the Tolling Study II analysis. David Forte, Strategic Planning and Programming, WSDOT, will assist with mapping out a potential work plan for the project.

Mr. Forte distributed an outline for the Commission to consider as a possible approach to Tolling Study II. Tolling Study II provides more funding for more detailed modeling and tolling operations on specific routes and structures. The Legislature's intent is to look at a more project specific, short term application or analysis process. The goal of the study is to provide the analysis of specific projects or systems for short-term implementation.

COMMISSION'S FACILITY NAMING POLICY

Reema Griffith, Executive Director, Transportation Commission, presented the final draft of the Commission's Facility Naming or Renaming Policy for approval. She provided an overview of the criteria outlined in the policy.

It was moved Commissioner Stedman to adopt the Facility Naming/Renaming Policy.

Commissioner Distler requested that the policy be amended to state: "Whether the person or group committed a significant amount of their time working on or addressing other significant issues in the state".

The motion passed unanimously as amended.

RESOLUTION HONORING SENATOR BOB OKE

Chair Ford presented Resolution 684 recognizing Senator Robert Eugene Oke for his many contributions to the State of Washington and its people. He noted Senator Oke's wife Judy's presence.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Neal and seconded by Commissioner Forner to adopt Resolution 684 in recognition of Senator Robert Eugene Oke. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners shared memories of Senator Oke and expressed their individual experiences with him.

Mrs. Oke expressed her thanks to the Commission for honoring Bob.

NAMING A PORTION OF SR 113 THE "KOREAN WAR VETERAN'S BLUE STAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY"

Chair Ford presented Resolution 685 naming a portion of SR 113 in Clallam County between the junction of Highway 101 and the junction of Highway 112, and Highway 112 from the junction of Highway 113 to the Makah Indian Reservation in Neah Bay the "Korean War Veterans' Blue Star Memorial Highway".

Je-anne Rogers assistant to Representative Lynn Kessler explained that Representative Kessler was the prime sponsor of this legislation and wishes to express her appreciation to the Commission for moving this naming forward.

It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner O'Neal to adopt Resolution 685 naming a portion of SR 113 the "Korean War Veterans' Blue Star Memorial Highway" honoring those that served in the war. The motion passed unanimously.

NAMING THE CLINTON FERRY TERMINAL THE "JACK METCALF FERRY TERMINAL"

Chair Ford presented Resolution 686 naming the Clinton Ferry Terminal the "Jack Metcalf Ferry Terminal" recognizing Washington State Senator/U.S. Congressman Jack Metcalf's commitment to serving the people of Washington State.

Mrs. Metcalf and daughters expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the recognition of Congressman Metcalf.

It was moved by Commissioner Barnes and seconded by Commissioner Stedman to adopt Resolution 686 naming the Clinton Ferry Terminal the "Jack Metcalf Ferry Terminal" recognizing U.S. Senator Jack Metcalf's many contributions to serving the people of Washington State. The motion passed unanimously.

URBAN PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

Brian Smith, Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, WSDOT, introduced Charlie Howard, Transportation Planning Director, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and Ron Posthuma, Assistant Director of Transportation, King County.

Mr. Smith explained that today's presentation will provide a brief review of the Urban Partnership Agreement and its concept, as well as provide a status update and provide additional detail regarding the telecommute provisions of the proposal. Under Urban Partnership agreements selected metropolitan areas would have to agree to aggressively tackle congestion under the umbrella of tolling, transit, technology and telecommuting, therefore providing a combined approach to reduce traffic congestion, in a relatively short time period. In return Urban Partners will have priority in apply for certain already existing grant programs and additionally would receive application and processing assistance, if for example someone wanted to propose tolling on an interstate facility. In response to this opportunity King County, PSRC and WSDOT formed what was called the Lake Washington Urban Partnership. The partnership is seeking federal grant monies that are targeted to replace the SR 520 Lake Washington floating bridge to make travel across Lake Washington more efficient, effective and productive. The partnership working from a premise that tolling when approved by the Legislature may be a critical component of paying for the SR 520 Project. The Lake Washington Urban Partnership proposes a much more integrated and systems approach to keeping people moving and support the region's economy and quality of life.

Mr. Posthuma explained that when the State approached King County with the partnership opportunity one of the things they asked was that transit service be ramped up coincident with tolling and the SR 520 Bridge. He believes that the USDOT feels that if everything can work together at the same time all of the pieces would fit. The morning ridership commute would be where the change would take place, as that is where the greatest ridership takes place. To accommodate this King County has asked the federal government to pay for 45 buses necessary to implement the ramp up. Park and ride lots on the eastside of King County would require improvements to accommodate the ridership demand. The County is also offering telecommuting for its employees and is encouraging downtown employers to do the same, specifically around I-5 and over time around the SR 520 corridor. Transportation demand management is also on the table.

Mr. Howard pointed out that a lot of attention has been given to tolling in the Urban Partnership proposal. PSRC is aware that ultimately the decision will be made at the legislative level. One of the other key aspects is active traffic management where technology would be used to make the system function and react to traffic flow in a smart way. This form of traffic management has shown very positive results in Europe.

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Paul Parker, Senior Policy Analyst, WSTC, explained that even though it's early in the year he has begun working on the Commission's 2007 Annual Report. The report should be ready for adoption at the Commission's November meeting. He suggested that the same structure be used as last year's report beginning with an overview of activities and then moving on to priority issues.

Chair Ford emphasized that a portion of the report should focus on what's working and what's not and continuation of transparency to the public.

Jennifer Ziegler, Governor's Office, shared that she feels the report is informative, but questioned why there was not more information on connectivity and why safety had not been included.

Commissioners provided Mr. Parker with potential items that they feel should be included in the report.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Barnes reported that he attended a Transportation Improvement Board meeting in Stevenson regarding I-90 and Highway 14. He also attended a Washington/Oregon Bi-state meeting as well as local RTC meetings. The Columbia River Crossing Project is primarily on the areas radar screen.

Commissioner O'Neal reported that he attended a Freight Mobility Roundtable meeting.

Commissioner Stedman provided an update regarding the planning of the upcoming Spokane Summit. He expressed that he hopes all Commissioners take an active roll.

Commissioner Forner reminded Commissioners that they will be in Wenatchee on Monday, September 18 for the local meeting. She asked Commissioners if there is a specific topic or project of interest that they would like to discuss she would work with the Regional Administrator to make it happen.

Commissioners suggested potential items of discussion that Commissioner Forner might consider.

Jennifer Ziegler, Executive Policy Advisor, Governor's Office, shared that Keystone Center has been retained to mediate the SR 520 Bridge Project. Keystone is currently meeting with stakeholders and plans to submit a progress report August 1. By December 2008 they will submit a final project impact plan to Governor Gregoire and the Legislature. She noted that there is ongoing conversation with all parties on the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

Commissioner Moser reported that she attended the SR 24 and SR 240 ribbon cuttings. She shared information on Driving Rural Yakima Valley Economics Coalition (Dryve), noting that it is a multi-county, city, tribes, elected officials and business partnership that are prioritizing area projects. The coalition recently received one of the largest grants in the United States to provide mobility on tribal reservations.

Commissioner Distler reported he has been busy with ferry issues. He recently attended a Ferry Advisory Executive Council meeting. He briefly shared his views on the direction that might be taken with the Ferry Survey. He also commented on his participation in the Ferry Finance group expressing that he is optimistic that all of the work underway will lead to long-term solutions for the ferry system. He indicated that users' expectations are that the quality of ferry service today should not deteriorate in the future..

Chair Ford reported that he is participating in the Transportation Working Group (TWG). He explained that TWG is working with the Governor's Committee on Climate Change focusing on finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state.

OVERVIEW OF WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES RELATED INTERIM ACTIVITIES

Paul Hammond, Chief of Staff, WSDOT, explained that the Department has many ongoing activities resulting from the legislative session. She provided a brief overview of the Ongoing and Continuous Activities Chart, noting that the Department is utilizing this chart to make certain that nothing is overlooked.

Steve Reinmuth, Government Relations Director, WSDOT, distributed and referred to the WSDOT activities chart, noting that it is continually being updated and provided to legislators. He emphasized that the chart's primary purpose is to keep the JTC, Legislative staff, WSF and others in the loop. The chart indicates the many tasks that flowed from SHB 2358 and how the tasks relate to each other. He emphasized that vessel acquisition has been added to the chart even though it was not a part of SHB 2358, but because it is a task that WSDOT is doing anyway.

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, WSF, provided an overview of the charts to-do list. He explained that within a week of the legislative session end, WSF executive management formed working teams to formulate an approach strategy to meet the December 2008 deadline for the workplan items. In support of this effort WSF has been collaborating and

developing an overall approach to the work, most recently, with the JTC and the Transportation Commission. He stepped the Commission through the four organized series of work tasks that it has responsibility for; operational strategies, pricing strategies and fares, capital programming tasks and long-range planning. He explained that WSF is currently in the process of rebasing ridership forecasts, working with PSRC and its new overall transportation model, as it pertains to generating cross-sound trips and incorporating information that was obtained through the Origin Destination Survey conducted in October 2006. The Commission's work is integrated into the entire process. All of the information that is accumulated will be integrated into a revised Long-Range Service and Capital Plan for WSF that will be adopted by the Commission in the future.

Mr. Reinmuth reminded the Commission that under current law, ferry fares are frozen until 2009.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Paul Locke, citizen, shared his various concerns.

Donald Williams, citizen, shared various concerns.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary MacDonald introduced the new WSDOT Director of Public Transportation Katy Taylor.

Ms. Taylor explained that her background has been primarily in transportation, and that she is looking forward to working with the WSDOT team.

Secretary MacDonald shared that over the last few weeks there has been active discussion with the Commission and WSF regarding system demands and how its future will be shaped. He moved on to discuss the economic situation of the ferry system explaining that running up the fares will eventually translate into lower revenues because of the elasticity of demand. In closing he shared that he feels the ferry system is a tourism icon for the state of Washington, noting that the manner in which this system functions must be looked at very carefully for its sustainable future. In closing he emphasized that we have the capacity to look at solutions that are not bottom-line oriented.

Commissioner Distler pointed out that the challenge is that over a 16 year period 11 percent of the total 18th Amendment funds are slated to go to the ferry system, but the ferry system, on the basis of vehicle miles traveled, produces as much volume in an entire year as the state highway system does in a single day. This suggests that ferry system in terms of vehicle miles carried represents about one third of one percent of the total operating function of the Department of Transportation (highways only).

Chair Ford presented Secretary MacDonald Resolution 687 recognizing and honoring him for his exemplary service and commitment to the state of Washington and its citizens during his tenure as Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Secretary MacDonald thanked the Commission and reflected on some of the events that have occurred over the last six years.

GRAY NOTEBOOK UPDATE

Daniela Bremmer, Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, WSDOT, presented Secretary MacDonald a folio designed specifically for him titled “Doug’s Accountability Legacy”. The folio provides an overview of his management style and accomplishments during his tenure at the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Maintenance

Tom Root, Assistant State Maintenance Engineer, provided the annual 2006-07 post winter update report highlighting snow and ice removal last winter and other emergency maintenance activities. He moved on to explain that in 2006 the Legislature authorized a program where private firms registered with WSDOT could offer affordable tire chain installation services for motorists on Stevens and Snoqualmie passes. This program is an example of a low cost, high benefit program that may improve safety and traffic flow conditions. Although the service use was not dramatically high those that used it were satisfied and very appreciative.

Project Deliver

Keith Metcalf, Director of Project Control and Reporting, WSDOT, provided a summary of highway construction performance as of March 2007. He shared that at the end of March 2007 seventy nine projects were completed, of this there has been a 92 percent on-time delivery and an 85 percent on-budget delivery, which equals to a 78 percent on-time and on-budget delivery. He explained that more importantly the expected budget for completion of the projects was accomplished by less than a one percent overage. He provided highlights of various projects throughout the state.

Aviation

John Sibold, Director of Aviation, WSDOT, provided an annual update that included airport pavement management, pavement condition rating, Local Airport Aid Grant Program, Aircraft registrations and airport land use compatibility assistance. He noted that pavement ratings have improved based on preventative maintenance. Currently the Department is conducting two studies addressing state aviation needs and priorities; the Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS) and WSDOT Managed Airports (WMA) System Evaluation and Strategic Plan. The Department’s grant program has distributed \$3.2 million in grants to 66 general aviation airports in the state for 82 projects. These grant funds will be used for airport safety and pavement projects. For further information on the Department’s Aviation Program please visit: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/default.htm>

Rest Areas

Thanh Nguyen, Facility Planning and Delivery Manager, WSDOT, provided an overview of safety rest area data. He explained that the Department conducts a biennial assessment of conditions at rest areas and attempts to prioritize projects accordingly. He touched briefly on customer satisfaction.

SR 167 HOT LANES PILOT PROJECT TOLL SETTING WORKSHOP

Toll Operations & Maintenance Organization & Role

Greg Selstead, Tolling Operations Director, WSDOT, explained that the purpose of today's presentation is to provide an overview of toll operations role and the rate setting process for the SR167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project. He provided an overview of tolling operations of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge on opening day. All in all the functionality of the operation was a very positive experience for customers and very successful for the Department. He moved on to explain future ETC challenges.

Chair Ford requested that Mr. Selstead provide weekly traffic count data to the Commission.

SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot

Patty Rubstello, Traffic Policy Engineer, Urban Corridors, WSDOT, explained that the SR 167 Pilot Project converts the existing HOV lane into a HOT lane system. This will allow SOV (single occupant vehicle) the ability to buy their way into the HOV lane. The pilot project will test the feasibility of HOT lanes in the region and how it can help to get more out of the existing system. SR 167 was chosen because of its peak-hour congestion in both the morning and afternoon where available capacity exists in the HOV lane. The project will function in the same manner as the Tacoma Narrows Bridge toll collection, with the exception of a manual toll facility. It will use the "Good To Go" transponder for the HOT lane toll collection and use a flexible rate depending on traffic flow. The Department plans to begin the process in October with the WAC rule filing, hold public hearings in November and adopt the toll rate in December 2007.

Mr. Pope provided an overview of the functionality of the HOT lanes. He explained that the Tacoma Narrows Bridge is very different than the proposed SR 167 HOT Lane Pilot Project. HOT lanes are utilized for traffic management and the disposition of the toll revenue will go into a HOT Lanes Account. The Commission will review performance data as collected.

WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES IN-NEED ORGANIZATION STATUS REQUEST – VASHON YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

Greg Thompson, Social Services Coordinator, Vashon Youth and Family Services, explained that his organization is a public mental health agency that provides services to low income families. Individuals seeking social services are often referred to Seattle for services, and provide vouchers for off island travel. When the ferry system switched to the "Wave To Go" card vouchers became obsolete and could no longer be provided to the needy. He explained that he has the support of the local Ferry Advisory Committee to come before the Commission requesting discount fares for these in-need groups.

It was moved by Commissioner Distler and seconded by Commissioner Moser to extend a discount fare to Vashon Youth and Family Services. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Distler expressed that he is surprised that there have not been more in-need groups come forward with this type of request. He indicated that perhaps WSF should consider doing some public outreach.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m., on July 18, 2007.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DICK FORD, Chair

ELMIRA FORNER, Vice-Chair

EDWARD BARNES, Member

CAROL MOSER, Member

DAN O'NEAL, Member

ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

DALE STEDMAN, Member

PAULA HAMMOND, Ex-Officio Member
Secretary of Transportation

JENNIFER ZIEGLER, Governor's Office

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

DATE OF APPROVAL